

700 Lawrence Ave. W., Suite 310
Toronto, Ontario M6A 3B4

Tel: (416) 367-3313
1-800-267-6817 (Ont)
Fax: (416) 367-2844
E-mail: info@opha.on.ca
www.opha.on.ca

Honorary Patron
The Hon. David C. Onley
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

President
Carol Timmings
E-mail: ctimmings@opha.on.ca

Executive Director
Connie Uetrecht
E-mail: cuetrecht@opha.on.ca

Constituent Societies
ANDSOOHA – Public Health
Nursing Management in Ontario

Association of Ontario
Health Centres

Association of Public Health
Epidemiologists in Ontario

Association of Supervisors of Public
Health Inspectors of Ontario

Canadian Institute of Public
Health Inspectors (Ontario Branch)

Community Health Nurses' Initiatives
Group (RNAO)

Health Promotion Ontario:
Public Health

Ontario Association of Public Health
Dentistry

Ontario Public Health Libraries
Association

Ontario Society of Nutrition
Professionals in Public Health

Public Health Research, Education
and Development (PHRED)
Program

Charitable Registration
Number 11924 8771 RR0001

March 14, 2005

Dr. Sheela V. Basrur
Chief Medical Officer of Health and Assistant Deputy Minister
Public Health Division, Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Hepburn Block, 11th Floor
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto ON M7A 1R3

Dear Dr. Basrur:

The Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) would like to commend you on your ongoing commitment to access and equity, highlighted recently during the Question and Answer period of your keynote at the 2004 OPHA Conference. We were particularly pleased to hear your assurance that the Equal Access Standard will be part of the Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines (MHPSPG) review.

As you may know, the OPHA Access, Equity and Social Justice Standing Committee has been very active in advocating for changes to the current Equal Access Standard. We believe that in addition to Equal Access continuing as a General Standard, indicators for Equal Access should be developed and integrated throughout the mandatory programs. As a stand-alone general standard, Equal Access is often overlooked and/or difficult to quantify by individual health units.

Attached are [the reports from the Equal Access Pilot Project](#) which was led by the Ottawa Public Health. This pilot project built upon the access and equity indicator work of the OPHA Access, Equity and Social Justice Standing Committee. The outcome of this pilot project is a workbook that is now available to health units to help them implement the Equal Access Standard. We are requesting that the Ministry consider the work that has already been done by the Mandatory Programs Measurement Working Group; the OPHA Access, Equity and Social Justice Standing Committee; and the Ottawa Public Health Unit to ensure that the updated Mandatory Programs and Services are developed along with established, valid measures. The OPHA Access, Equity and Social Justice Standing Committee members would also welcome a discussion as to how we can assist the Ministry to move

forward on developing a revised MHPSG that will ensure equitable access to public health programs and services. As a start, we suggest the Ministry consider hosting a forum bringing experts from access and equity, epidemiology and performance management to begin a dialogue about what an integrated MHPSG might look like.

If you have more questions and/or would like to discuss this further, please contact Caroline Wai, Chair of the OPHA Access, Equity and Social Justice Standing Committee (416-338-2303, cwai@toronto.ca). We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Dr. Garry Aslanyan
President, Ontario Public Health Association